

REMARKS

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 2, 3, 6 and 13-15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7-12 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,554,211 to Prueter et al. in view of U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2003/0052194 to Streutkler et al. and further in view of U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2005/0133624 to Hornsby et al. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended to more particularly define the present invention over the cited prior art.

More specifically, claim 12 recites, *inter alia*,

“...a control module having spring biased product and vent flow control means disposed therein, said product and vent flow control means being operable between valve open and valve closed positions by engagement of said manual actuator to said product and vent flow control means....”

Nowhere does the prior art teach or suggest these features.

The Examiner points to the check valve (72) and the translating piston 30 of the Streutkler et al. reference as describing the spring biased product flow control means and the spring biased vent flow control means of claim 12. This analysis is flawed. The check valve 72 of the Streutkler et al. reference, which is located between the container cap 44 and the dip tube 80, is opened and closed by operation of the pump 28 (i.e., opened when the pump generates

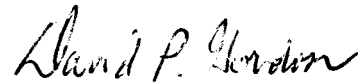
pressure sufficient to open the check valve). Because the check valve 72 is operated by the pump 28, it is clearly not operated by engagement of a manual actuator to the check valve as required by claim 12. Moreover, the system of the Streutkier et al. reference clearly does not operate both product flow control means and vent flow control means by engagement of a manual actuator to the product and vent flow control means as required in claim 12. Because the cited prior art fails to teach or suggest important limitations of claim 12, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 12 is patentable over the cited prior art. Similar arguments apply to amended claim 1.

Dependent claims 4, 5, 7-11 and 16-20 are patentable over the cited prior art for those reasons advanced above with respect to claims 1 and 12 from which they respectfully depend, and for reciting additional features that are neither taught or suggested by the cited prior art.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement submitted to the Patent Office on June 29, 2006 and initial and sign the PTO-1449 form submitted therewith as evidence of such consideration.

In light of all of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in order for allowance, and prompt allowance is earnestly requested. Should any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney of record so that the case may proceed expeditiously to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David P. Gordon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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